

# NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MARKEY & KENNEDY ANNOUNCE OVER \$10 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR NATICK LABS**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Rep. Ed Markey (D-Malden) and Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) announced that the Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Massachusetts (Natick Labs) is set to receive \$5.5 million in federal funding under the Military Construction spending bill approved by the House and Senate this week. Additionally, contractors in cooperation with Natick Labs have been granted at least an additional \$5 million in federal funds for a variety of programs under the Defense Appropriations bill passed last month.

Rep. Markey said, "Natick Labs continues to lead the Army's efforts to protect our soldiers in battle. Using cutting-edge technology and facilities, strong partnerships with Massachusetts universities and corporations, and top-notch leadership, it has once again been awarded a generous federal appropriation to build a new Thermal Test Facility. The new facility will help to cement Natick's place as one of the Army's key research and development hubs."

Sen. Kennedy said, "Natick's work is crucial to protecting our men and women in the field. With every soldier who survives an attack in Iraq because of Natick's interceptor body armor, we see the success and importance of their work. This new Thermal Test Facility will allow us to develop equipment to protect our soldiers and sailors from fires in the battlefield and on ships."

Col. David Bongi, head of Natick Labs, said, "We appreciate the efforts of Representative Markey, Senator Kennedy, the Congress and the President for funding this important facility. A Tremendous Asset!! The Thermal Test Facility will collocate the material developer and test capability and allow the testing of various materials and systems for all services, against all thermal threats, including flame and laser accelerating products to the field."

This \$5.5M project would provide a new state of the art facility at Soldier Systems Center for the full scale testing under controlled conditions of uniforms and support equipment to determine the adequacy of protection provided to our soldier. Testing is currently performed at off site facilities designed for different type of applications and not complete uniform ensembles.

Contractors doing work at Natick Labs received funding in the Defense Appropriations Bill, which passed last month. They include Foster Miller, based in Waltham for Combat Casualty Care research totaling \$3 million and Battelle Systems for research and development of protective clothing for chemical and biological attacks totaling \$2 million.

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